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'Cmdr. Zero' Outlines Goals For Nicaragua

Eden Pastora, the Nicaraguan guerrilla leader, visited Washington recently. He stopped by my office for a visit. Though it was the first time we had met, we knew of each other.

I've reported the legendary exploits of the revolutionary "Commander Zero" since the days when he first took up arms against the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza. In 1978 and 1979 my former associate Bob Sherman spent some time with Pastora at his jungle hideout. Not long afterward, Pastora and his Sandinista fighters captured the presidential palace in Managua. Somoza had fled.

Now Pastora is fighting the Sandinista regime he helped to bring to power. Several months ago I sent my roving reporter, Jon Lee Anderson, to travel with Pastora in the Nicaraguan bush, where he commands approximately 2,000 guerrillas.

The charismatic rebel leader was in Washington soliciting support from the Reagan administration for his financially strapped troops. He didn't have much luck.

The reason is simple: for all his

rugged charm and the glamor of his past adventures, Pastora is a political maverick the CIA doesn't trust. He is an outspoken revolutionary; the CIA suspects him of leaning too far to the left.

So Pastora has received only a token offering of CIA money and guns, nothing like the support enjoyed by the CIA's anti-Sandinista creation, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN). The CIA is trying to coerce Pastora to join the FDN, which he says he will never do as long as its military leadership includes former officers of Somoza's National Guard.

Instead of encouraging him, Pastora said, the CIA is trying actively to sabotage his efforts to raise funds. "They are afraid I will eclipse their Somocista army," Pastora said. "But they want me around to legitimize the FDN, which has no popular appeal in Nicaragua."

Pastora is right about the last point: the FDN's civilian leaders are conservative businessmen and politicians, and its top military officers are almost all former National Guard members. This taints the whole group as far as most Nicaraguans are concerned.

Pastora's group, on the other hand, is led mainly by former Sandinistas. Their quarrel with the Managua junta is simply that it betrayed the revolution. They are anticommunist, but they favor more socialism than the Reagan administra-

When we spoke the other day, Pastora told me his conditions for joining ranks with the FDN: "They must get rid of all the ex-National Guardsmen. They must also agree that what comes to Nicaragua after victory must be revolutionary as well as democratic."

It's that kind of talk that scares the Reagan administration, which has spread the rumor that Pastora has a Castro connection. Though he denies it, he does admit that one of his top aides has talked recently to the Cuban dictator. Pastora evidently feels it's a good tactic to make the Reagan people worry about his opening to Cuba's Fidel Castro, a warning that he can get help elsewhere if Washington turns him down.

Gamesmanship: President Reagan had a few kind words to say the other day about the video games that obsess many American young sters. "Many young people have developed incredible hand eye and brain coordination in playing these games," he told a group of math and science students. The Air Force believes these kids will be outstanding pilots when they fly our jets."

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But the president hastened to add that he didn't want the kids telling their parents he thought it was okay to play video games all the time. "Homework sports and friends come first," he said.